

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

Sept. 6, 2012

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Inclusion Steering Committee

by Tammy Wallace



A committee dedicated to diversity and inclusion has been working to change MoDOT's culture and climate relating to its employees and those with whom it does business. The Internal Inclusion Steering Committee, led by Chief Engineer Dave Nichols, consists of MoDOT senior management and representatives of the Federal Highway Administration. The committee has established strategies on how to approach this area of change, along with the desired outcomes they wish to achieve.

Why would an inclusion committee be so important to MoDOT. "Business as usual is not the way to position MoDOT for the future," Nichols said. "To stay relevant, we need to change the way we do business as it relates to diversity."

Early on the Committee established their purpose and the outcomes they wanted to achieve. Those, along with their strategies, help guide the direction of the committee.

Purpose Statement: The purpose of the Internal Inclusion Steering Committee is to bring about the organizational change necessary to increase and sustain inclusion and diversity in employment, procurement, construction and other business opportunities.

Outcomes: 1) The MoDOT workforce, its contractors, vendors and suppliers is representative locally, regionally and statewide of the diversity of the State of Missouri; 2) Outsourced business opportunities represent local, regional and statewide diversity in Missouri; and 3) All MoDOT employees feel valued and respected for who they are and what they contribute.

Some of the strategies that have recently been put into place:

- **DBE Mixers** – MoDOT hosted two regional meetings to help disadvantaged businesses and MoDOT staff get to know each other better. After-hours mixers in St. Louis and Kansas City gave both groups a chance to put faces with names, gather insights on how to be a successful contractor and generally build stronger relationships. Plans are in place to expand the mixers to more cities in 2013.
- **Procurement Resource Library** – A listing of minority and women owned business was developed and added to the procurement resource library on the general services intranet page. The document lists all contact information and what each business has to offer. It was first distributed this spring during the statewide maintenance and traffic highway safety meeting, and all employees dealing with purchases are urged to use this list.
- **Tracker** - Several division tracker measures have also been added or modified as a way to track how the committee's efforts are working towards their desired outcomes.

As the committee continues working on this important organizational change, updates on further outcomes will be provided in Connections.

Value Statement: MoDOT values diversity and inclusiveness because we believe in the power of our differences.

A Cheaper Way to China

by DeAnne Rickabaugh

Gastineau Log Homes, based in New Bloomfield, Mo., found an exciting new market for their oak log homes – China.

But getting the log home kits to cargo ship ports in a trailer was an expensive proposition. The kits are heavier than the top weight legally allowed on the highway. If each kit was to move in multiple trailers, the cost would threaten the success of the opportunity.

Luckily, Lynn Gastineau discovered a special type of oversize overweight load permit offered through the Missouri Department of Transportation. Working with MoDOT's Motor Carrier Services unit, she found that she could load a home kit into a standard shipping container and obtain an overweight permit as long as the container bore a shipping seal.



A shipping seal is a numbered tag or strip threaded through loops on the doors of a container. It indicates whether tampering occurred during a shipment.

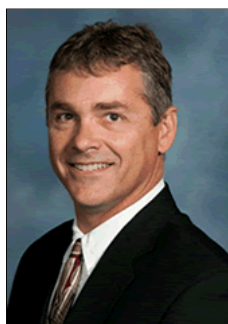
Containers like these are used by a Missouri company to manage the cost of exporting log home kits.

"We love finding ways to help Missouri businesses grow and thrive," said Jan Skouby, Motor Carrier Services director. "In this case, other travelers and the environment win, too. By loading one home per container rather than in multiple trailers, we're able to reduce the number of trucks in traffic."

The only significant difference between a permit for a traditional and a containerized overweight load is that the shipping seal number and the port of entry/exit must be provided on the application. Even the permit fees are the same.

What's Happening

Scott Simon Named Executive Director of MPERS



Scott Simon has been named Executive Director of the MoDOT and Highway Patrol Employees' Retirement System (MPERS). He replaces Susie Dahl, who retired September 1.

"Scott was a great hire. We are confident that with his pension background, he will continue to provide excellent leadership to MPERS for years to come," says Major Bret Johnson, MPERS Board Chair.

Prior to joining MPERS, Scott gained more than 15 years of public pension plan experience with the Missouri State Employees' Retirement System (MOSERS). As the Manager of Benefit Services, he was responsible for coordinating MOSERS' retirement, life insurance, and long-term disability benefit programs.

Scott holds a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the University of Missouri.

Public Auction Planned for Springfield

The first public auction planned as a result of the Bolder Five-Year Direction is scheduled for Sept. 13 at the MoDOT facility at 4101 W. Sunshine in Springfield.

Those who attend will find tools, road equipment, office equipment, building materials, and other items. MoDOT employees are welcome to participate in the auction, but must use annual leave or flex time to do so. A flyer for the auction is available at www.crawfordauctionservice.com/sites/default/files/MoDOT%20SN.pdf

Arrangements are still being made for the additional public auctions around the state. To find out when and where those auctions will occur, check www.modot.org or "like" the Missouri Department of Transportation on Facebook.

Child Passenger Safety Seat Week



From 2009-2011 there were a total of 28 children under the age of eight who died on our roadways. An additional 315 suffered disabling injuries. Missouri law requires all children under the age of eight to be in an appropriate child safety seat or booster seat unless they are 80 lbs. or 4'9" tall. Regular child safety seat and safety belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes. Crashes are the No. 1 killer of kids.

Please help us increase child safety seat use by participating in the National CPS Week campaign September 16-22, 2012, promoting child restraint usage throughout Missouri. For more information visit saveMOLives.com.

September Service Anniversaries

40 Years

J. David Logan - CD

30 Years

Steven A. Rodgers - NE
Laurence Tichy - SL

25 Years

Lisa A. Stupps - KC
Timothy M. Shaw - SL
Dewayne D. Ligons - SE
Jesse C. Williams - SE
Beverly Koetting - CO

20 Years

John S. Cline - NE
Shannon P. Skoglund - NE
Joy L. Van Wye - NE
Connie S. Phipps - KC
Glenda L. Saunders - KC
Fredrico B. Reliford - KC

15 Years

James C. Wrenn - NW
Darin D. Dale - NE
Regina Kogen - KC
Kenneth V. Thomas - CD
Troy A. Wilson - CD
David A. Sappington - SW
Gregory E. Buckner - SE
Thomas J. Sullivan - SE
Raymond A. Murray - CO
Kimberly A. Larimore - CO
John A. Eastman - CO

10 Years

Timothy L. Hays - NW
Lewis K. Calvas - NW
Cory C. March - NE
Andrew D. Dittmer - NE
Deborah K. Carter - NE
Brian E. Hof - KC
Nevin H. Lees - KC

5 Years

Johnathan C. Frame - NW
Allen R. Cassmeyer - NE
Gerver A. Hernandez - KC
Dena R. Lee - KC
Tad M. Owings - CD
Christopher L. Barnwell - CD
Glenn Holmes - SL
Joseph W. Marler - SL
William K. Marshall - SL
Rebecca R. Fort - SL
Jerome L. Mitchell - SL
Jessie D. Scherrer - SL
Eric T. Cash - SW
Eric S. Greig - SW
Justin R. Moriarty - SW
Daron M. Williamson - SE
Karlheinz R. Francis - SE
James E. Triplett - SE
Brian M. Mitchell - SE

Eric B. Reents - KC
 Darryl W. Wilson - CD
 Ena M. Hayden - SL
 Mark E. Winningham - SW
 Jason W. Stewart - SW
 Matthew S. Johnson - CO
 Kimberly J. Tipton - CO

Charles E. Silvey - CD
 David W. Kliethermes - CD
 Gregory S. Lester - SW
 Sara M. Johnson - SE
 David J. Hagemeyer - CO

August Retirements

Steven Brooks - NW - 35 yrs
 Nancy Capps - NW - 24 yrs
 John Cline - NE - 20 yrs
 Vicki Cragen - NE - 22 yrs
 Maria Stuck - KC - 16 yrs
 Ross Kleinschmidt - SL - 24 yrs

Robert Gummersheimer - SL - 29 yrs
 Phillip Walka - SL - 29 yrs
 Arthur Clark - SL - 24 yrs
 Ronald Blakley - SW - 27 yrs
 Portia Marshall - SW - 17 yrs
 Jackie Jenkins - SE - 26 yrs

Donald Meyer - CO - 23 yrs
 Debbie Trusley - CO - 24 yrs
 Matthew Woodson - CO - 27 yrs
 Raymond Kinard - CO - 25 yrs
 Dennis Forbis - CO - 12 yrs

In Memorium

Harley Vaughan
 former D5 - August 1
 George Moss
 former D3 - August 2
 Paul Earley
 former D3 - August 4
 Charles Stowers (Active Employee)
 SE District - August 8
 Harold White
 former D9 - August 10

Jesse McCarter
 former D6 - August 15
 Lawrence Redding
 former D1 - August 17
 Robert Morrow
 former D3 - August 19
 Johnny Jordan
 former D10 - August 21

Thomas Graham
 former D9 - August 21
 George Dieckman, Jr.
 CO - August 21
 Gilbert Taylor
 former D6 - August 22
 Gary Blanner
 former D9 - August 25

Connections

The mission of Connections is to be a source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide.

Customer Relations - MoDOT
 P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
 573.751.2840 / www.modot.org

Editor: Tammy Wallace

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Environmental and Historic Preservation Training Update

by Melissa Scheperle

If you missed the Environmental and Historic Section Training last April, you can now access a video of the presentations on SharePoint! You can hear and see the presentations as they were given during the training from your desk.

The videos are located on the Environmental and Historic Preservation SharePoint page of the Design Division page in the shared documents. The folder is named "Environmental and Historic Preservation Training for Districts - 2012". In this folder you will also find the packet of information that was sent to the districts in preparation of the training and also the power point presentations of each individual specialty topic. The videos are located in a subfolder named "Video of Presentations-2012".

http://sharepoint/systemdelivery/RW/environmental_historic_pres/SitePages/Home.aspx

The videos and training information allows employees to have a refresher on any topic or get specifics regarding the information that was delivered in the training. If you have any questions please contact Melissa Scheperle at 573-526-6684.



What the heck is this? Review the Environmental and Historic Preservation training now offered through Sharepoint and you can find out!

Biggest Loser Slim in to Summer Edition

This edition of the Biggest Loser is final and we have the winners. Construction and Materials Pavement Engineer Paul Denkler (winner in the male category) and Intermediate Resource Management Analyst Shirley Bock (winner in the female category).

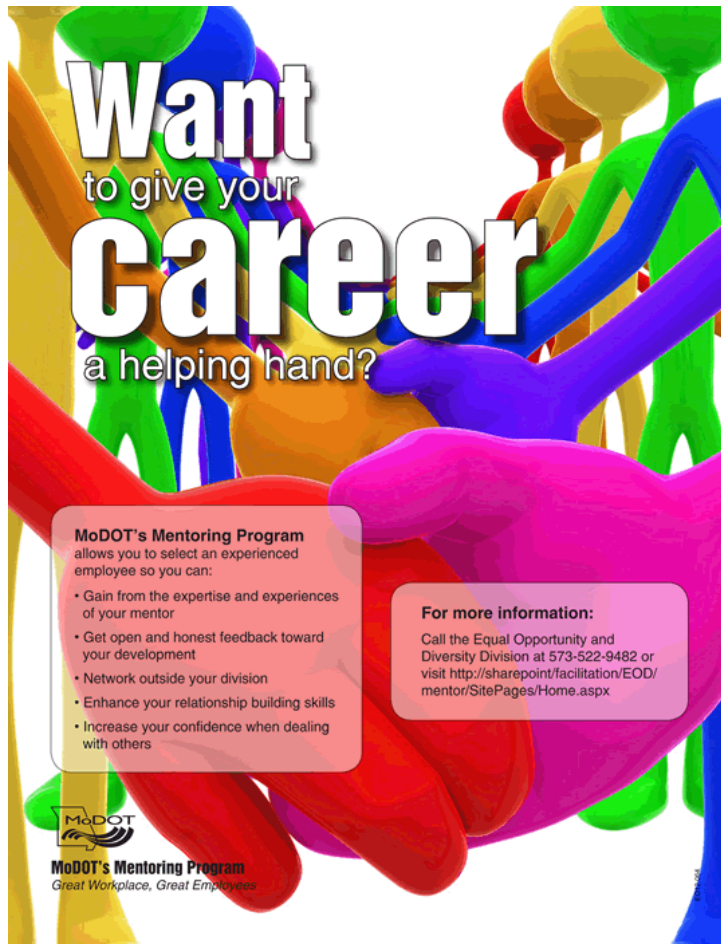
Employee Development Specialist Ashley Woods said the summer edition really paid off. Shirley was the first female ever to win the competition overall. Shirley had a 21.61 percentage loss and Paul had a 20 percentage loss, the fourth highest percentage ever in the competitions.

There were 28 employee participating in the summer competition who lost over 350 pounds. Watch for details on when the next edition will take place.



Biggest Losers Paul Denkler and Shirley Bock.

Mentoring Program



Want to give your career a helping hand?

MoDOT's Mentoring Program
allows you to select an experienced employee so you can:

- Gain from the expertise and experiences of your mentor
- Get open and honest feedback toward your development
- Network outside your division
- Enhance your relationship building skills
- Increase your confidence when dealing with others

For more information:
Call the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division at 573-522-9482 or visit <http://sharepoint/facilitation/EOD/mentor/SitePages/Home.aspx>



MoDOT's Mentoring Program
Great Workplace, Great Employees

Link to Sharepoint Site: <http://sharepoint/facilitation/EOD/mentor/SitePages/Home.aspx>

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Heroism Recognized

Four MoDOT Northwest District employees recently earned the department's Certification of Appreciation award for their valiant efforts assisting a family of six involved in a vehicle traffic incident on July 17.

The three pictured on the left above were on southbound I-29 in Atchison County when they came upon a one-vehicle crash off the side of the road just north of the Fairfax exit (Maintenance Supervisor Mike Lewis came upon the wreck a few minutes later). They were the third vehicle to pull over for the crash that had literally happened just seconds before.

A family had left the road in their Ford Escape and, since almost all of them were unrestrained, bodies were scattered everywhere. Three of the four children were hurt, and the SUV was burning. Thanks to their extensive safety training, the MoDOT folks were able to keep everything under control in the 100+ degree heat until the first responders showed up about 20 minutes later.

Sergeant Mike Quilty with the Missouri State Highway Patrol recently presented the MoDOT Mound City Maintenance facility with a plaque thanking the crew for all their hard work. They helped locate and recover the body of Trooper Fred Guthrie during last year's flood. Guthrie was recovered on Jan. 12, 2012, after several months of searching.



Top Photo l-r: Maintenance Worker John Evans, Maintenance Crew Leader Cathy Mackley and Maintenance Supervisor Bill Gimse. Middle Photo: Maintenance Supervisor Mike Lewis. Bottom Photo: Sergeant Mike Quilty presents an award to Maintenance Supervisor Mike Lewis and the MoDOT Mound City Maintenance Facility crew. First Row, l-r: Ed Hunziger, Chris Davison, Bret Bailey, Dusty Herron, Darin Meyer, Tim Hays. Second Row, l-r: J.R. Rother, Blake Nauman, Wayne Markt, Allan Markt, Bill Gallagher, Cody Moyer (Not pictured: Donald Medsker, Bill Keiffer)



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A Parade of Tractors for Final Bridge

On any given day in Missouri, you can witness transportation via tractor for the purpose of farming. However, for tractor enthusiasts, there are certain events they proudly fire up their engines and gather together to show their significance, and one of these events included the opening of the new bridge on Route 15 just north of Edina. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on the new, wider bridge, which was added to the Safe and Sound Bridge Program this year. Carol Kincaid, area resident, was one of 40 people who came out to witness this important improvement, and the lady who helped raise awareness of the need for a new bridge. "This is exciting for all of us in the area," she said, as she watched the tractors, big and small, old and new, travel across the bridge. Area Engineer Amy Crawford led the ceremony, which included several federal, state and local dignitaries. "This new, wider bridge is an investment that will serve transportation for the future," she said. "The tractor parade symbolizes where we have been and where we are going," she said referencing the antique tractor which led the parade and the oversized tractor which concluded the ceremony.



Terry "Red" Callahan, Knox County Commissioner, led the tractor parade during the Route 15 bridge ribbon cutting ceremony.

The Route 15 bridge over North Fork Fabius River on Route 15 between Edina and Memphis was opened the Tuesday before the ceremony. Two more bridges are opening this week and will finish out the Northeast District's Safe and Sound Program.

Press, Public Very Interested in New Bridge



Paula Gough, MoDOT Northeast District engineer, and John Nagengard, studies and plans engineer for IDOT, address questions during the press conference held to kick off the environmental assessment process for a new Champ Clark Bridge over the Mississippi River on US 54 at Louisiana.

To some people, an environmental assessment process could be "ho-hum". Yet, if you are talking about the process to begin looking at a new bridge across the Mississippi River on US 54 at Louisiana, you'll find people from all over the region are interested. A press conference was held last week to highlight the beginning of the process to work toward constructing a new bridge. Regulatory agencies from throughout the area participated in the press conference and stayed for the kickoff of the environmental assessment meeting which followed. Paula Gough, MoDOT Northeast District Engineer, shared prepared notes to the press and some of the citizens who attended, to enlighten them about the environmental assessment process and highlight the need for funding. She was joined by Illinois Department of Transportation officials who also addressed questions during the conference. The U.S. 54 Corridor Committee was represented and expressed their desire to be involved in the process. Paula shared MoDOT's desire to be "transparent and open" and encouraged those in attendance to be engaged and involved throughout the process.

Lead, Follow and Build A Team!

What does it take to build a team? Is it "okay" to ask for help with a project? What is our plan for this winter? About 70 supervisors attended their quarterly meeting in the Northeast District to find answers to these questions and much more during a day of interaction, networking and team building. "We hold quarterly supervisor meetings to help get all of us on the same page and bring everyone up to speed on some of the bigger issues going on in our department," said MoDOT Assistant District Engineer Kevin James.

"It is important to continue to develop our employees, so the meetings aren't just about pushing out information," he said. From changing the mail delivery process to preparing for MAPS and being prepared in the event of a security issue, most of the day is spent providing supervisors with practical suggestions to be successful.

These meetings are also good opportunities for our supervisors to ask questions. "We try to make sure the supervisors have enough information and knowledge about the topics to pass the information onto their employees," Kevin said. "These meetings are good forums to personally receive feedback from our supervisors on our direction, and they provide great insight on how MoDOT changes impact all levels of the organization," he added.



One of the team building exercises included answering a question, then throwing a ball of yarn to create a connected "web." Pictured above (l-r) Clint Ford, Todd Roth, Becky Novinger, Ervin Fackler, Macy Rodenbaugh, and Rich Arnold, catching the ball of yarn.

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KC Scout Pilots Weather Program Designed to Alert Travelers, Save Lives

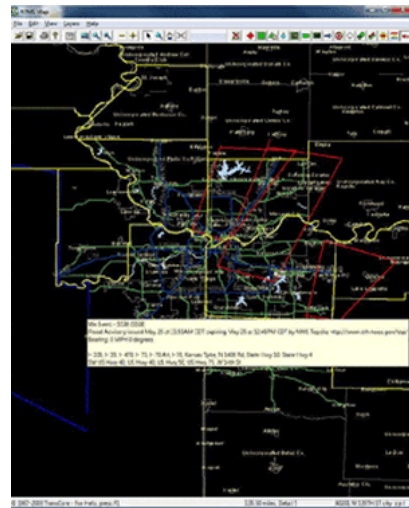
by Gina Myles

Last month, Kansas City Scout Traffic System Supervisor and Weather Integration project leader Nancy Powell traveled to Madison, Wis. to discuss how Scout's partnership with the National Weather Service can quickly alert travelers to adverse conditions, potentially minimizing threats to both property and lives. She discussed Scout's efforts to successfully integrate real time National Weather Service (NWS) issued warnings directly into Scout's Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) software, thus "pushing" adverse weather information directly to the traffic systems operator's desktop and enabling them with immediate dissemination of the severe weather alert via DMS, web updates, and Twitter feeds. Approximately 90 attendees representing 24 state DOTs, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), academia, and the vendor community learned more about the new integration, weather as a component of traffic congestion, and how the potential threat to life and property can be handled quickly and updated as conditions change.

In 2009, Scout was selected to participate in a pilot FHWA project to integrate available weather information into TMC operations in an effort to provide real time adverse weather condition notifications to the public. This partnership resulted in a comprehensive evaluation of current weather integration strategies and a means to implement improvements in the capture and use of real time weather forecast data and the ability to incorporate it into the existing ATMS so weather could be treated with the same urgency as lane closures in terms of its impact on area roadways.

A partnership with the NWS and Scout's ATMS vendor and systems integrator made it a reality. It involved the receipt and translation of NWS issued warning advisories alerting Scout's TMC operators of an impending severe weather event. Those alerts then formed the basis for creating traffic impacting weather events advising motorists of the changing conditions helping them make better informed travel decisions.

All of this was accomplished within Scout's existing software maintenance budget and required no additional procurement spending on outside resources. Numerous states have expressed interest in knowing more about Scout's success with weather integration and the FHWA continues to champion Scout's efforts over the past three years. A side benefit is the value of providing the NWS with specific storm-related traffic data to help forecasters define and develop more impact related advisories; a true win-win for the weather and surface transportation agencies in Kansas City.



As active weather events are received from the NWS integrated data feed, they are displayed graphically on the ATMS Map as polygons. They are colored by the event's severity: Extreme (Red), Severe (Orange), Moderate (Yellow), Minor (Blue). A mouse-over shows the title, bearing, and roads.

MoDOT Hosts DBE Consultant Networking Event

by Jennifer Benefield

Nearly 80 Disadvantaged, Minority and Women Business Enterprises (D/M/WBEs), small businesses and pending applicants attended an informational meeting and networking event sponsored by MoDOT. Participants gathered at the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center August 30 to learn more about doing business with MoDOT, as well as network with large bridge/design firms and one another.

State Design Engineer Kathy Harvey welcomed participants and kicked off the meeting with an overview of the evening's agenda. The event's first two hours were dedicated to providing general overviews on processes, programs and supportive services designed to help D/M/WBE consultants successfully work with MoDOT. Senior Civil Rights Specialist Donnetta Cole delivered a presentation on how to become DBE Certified, and MoDOT's Audits Division discussed how consultants can become pre-qualified to do business with MoDOT.

State Bridge Engineer Dennis Heckman provided an update on the Bolder 5-Year Direction. "Even though our funding has dropped, there are still upcoming projects in the Kansas City region that will require consultant work," said Heckman. One of several projects cited included the Manchester Bridge Design-Build Project. Following the informational portion of the meeting, Heckman, Harvey, District Engineer Dan Niec, and additional MoDOT Central Office and Kansas City District staff were on hand to answer questions during the hour-long networking session.

This event held in Kansas City, and a similar event scheduled in the St. Louis region September 18, is one several ways MoDOT is reaching out to under-utilized groups within the DBE Program. Senior Civil Rights Specialist April Hendricks-Brown also spoke about MoDOT's Mentor/Protégé Program. This program is designed to provide advice, assistance and training to the DBE protégé which will improve that firm's management and operating skills. MoDOT's expectation is that the Mentor/Protégé Program will further the development of DBEs including but not limited to assisting them to move into non-traditional areas of work and/or compete in the marketplace outside the DBE Program, via the provision of training and assistance from other firms.



Senior Civil Rights Specialist Donnetta Cole discusses eligibility requirements for DBE Certification during a consultant networking meeting Aug. 30, 2012 at the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center. Photo by Jennifer Benefield

External Civil Rights Director Lester Woods brought the meeting portion to a close and encourage participant to stay for a social hour. "MoDOT values workplace diversity and inclusiveness," said Woods. "We are pleased to be here and we appreciate you taking time to get to know us, learn more about our upcoming projects, and network."

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program is a federally mandated program administered by MoDOT's External Civil Rights Office. The Office is responsible for the certification of firms owned and operated by "socially and economically disadvantaged" individuals.

To learn more, please visit the External Civil Rights webpage: <http://www.modot.mo.gov/ecr/>.

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First Portion of Route 63 Project Opens

The first portion of the new Route 63 and H interchange project – two new j-turns designed to improve safety and traffic flow – opened to traffic on Aug. 29. The j-turns are located between the Discovery Parkway Interchange and Bonne Femme Creek.

With the opening of the j-turns, the two existing cross-over intersections at Old Millers Road and South Rolling Hills Road were permanently closed. Closing the intersections eliminates the need for motorists to cross four lanes of fast-moving traffic on a four-lane divided highway. Drivers using the j-turn intersections instead turn right in the same direction of traffic, merge into the left lane, and then make a left turn in the direction they intend to travel.

Several j-turns are already in place in central Missouri on Route 54 west of Jefferson City. A video demonstrating how a j-turn works can be found at www.modot.org/central.

The j-turns are part of a larger project that includes building an interchange at Route 63 and Route H near the Columbia Regional Airport, constructing new southbound lanes from just north of Route 163 to Route H and using the existing southbound lanes to create an outer road system that will improve safety and access.

Chester Bross Construction of Hannibal is the contractor on the \$9.8 million project, which is scheduled to be completed in early November.



Central District Traffic Engineer Trent Brooks, right, explains to reporters the benefits of two new j-turns on Route 63 between Jefferson City and Columbia. Following the project briefing, media representatives were invited to try out the new j-turns before they opened to traffic on Aug. 29.

Snow Fight Help Expanded

State Maintenance Engineer Beth Wright visited the Central District on Aug. 30 to explain the process for emergency operations now that additional employees in the district and Central Office are available to help with plowing snow and other incidents.

A new statewide policy requires all employees in salary grade 16 and under, safety sensitive positions, to obtain their commercial driver's license and be available to help with the district's snow fights. There are about 196 additional employees available from the Central District and Central Office to help with snow fight efforts.

So instead of hiring emergency snow removal help, the district will now rely on existing employees to help out. There may be isolated instances when emergency workers will need to be hired in areas where the district doesn't have existing employees to help out, but that will be the exception.

In the past, MoDOT has hired more than 800 emergency workers statewide to help with snow operations. Hiring and training those workers takes time and money. Using existing staff is a better use of resources, said Central District Engineer Dave Silvester.



State Maintenance Engineer Beth Wright walks through the process for emergency operations with Central District and Central Office employees who are now available to help in emergency situations.

"I want to thank you for being troopers and putting your best foot forward to learn these new tasks," Silvester told the group. "I realize this has been challenging, and I want to say 'thank you' for your cooperation and patience."

You can view videos of the meeting on our intranet site: <http://d5web/cdweb/>.

Linn Student Wins MoDOT Scavenger Hunt



Emma Lee of Linn, Mo. is this year's winner of MoDOT's State Fair Scavenger Hunt. Emma won a brand new iPad, donated by KTU Constructors. Central District Engineer Dave Silvester presented Emma with her new iPad on Aug. 30 at the Linn Maintenance Facility. MoDOT's annual scavenger hunt sends fairgoers through the Transportation Exposition Center and Highway Gardens to find answers to 10 transportation-related questions. Emma correctly answered all 10 questions and her name was drawn from hundreds of entries at the conclusion of the fair on Aug. 19. KTU Constructors is the design-build contractor responsible for replacing 554 bridges across Missouri as part of MoDOT's Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program.

Thank you, Amy!

Amy Niederhelm, who has spent the past several months cross-training as a Customer Relations Specialist in the Central District, will return to her job as an Intermediate Governmental Relations Specialist at Central Office on Sept. 12. Amy will be returning just as Missouri legislators convene for their annual Veto Session. We thank Amy for her contributions to Customer Relations and wish her all the best as she continues her career in Governmental Relations!



Amy Niederhelm

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Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Meet St. Louis' Customer Response Team

by Kara Price



The Customer Response team, in partnership with the SouthWest maintenance buildings, delivers outstanding customer service and teamwork to help make MoDOT even more efficient. Back row: Brian Antonacci, senior maintenance worker; Shawn Glenn, seasonal maintenance worker; Keith McGee, intermediate maintenance worker. Front row: Erick Price, maintenance crew leader; Stephen Butler, assistant maintenance supervisor; Kevin Mullins, intermediate maintenance worker.

The Customer Response team knows the value of making new friends on behalf of MoDOT. This team is within St. Louis' south and west counties and began in November 2011 to focus on meeting the needs and approved requests of motorists. The purpose of the six-person team is to help team MoDOT with better and faster customer response. It works with the maintenance buildings on the SouthWest area team, including Sunset Hills, Ballas, Lemay and Eureka, to respond proactively to miscellaneous assignments on St. Louis highways, such as fixing a pothole, removing debris from a crash on the highway, or a major maintenance repair.

"It's not just about picking up dead deer on the highway, it's about much more than that. Our team does maintenance work, but is also the mediator between motorists and MoDOT maintenance," said Shawn Glenn, seasonal maintenance worker.

"We have a variety of maintenance and customer service knowledge among six people on this team," said Erick Price, maintenance crew leader.

These assignments average 10 per week and would eventually be call reports or incidents, but the Customer Response team responds to them before they get to that point. The team also responds to call reports that do come in averaging 50 per week. It works with the maintenance buildings to help respond to calls, incidents and anything else needed to help maintain state roads. The team quickly responds to motorists' needs within the district, so maintenance crews can focus on major maintenance work and projects. The priorities of the assignments is based off the incident response priorities book.

"Our team's goal is to continue to respond to motorists in less than 24 hours and keep them informed no matter what the request is," said Stephen Butler, assistant maintenance supervisor and leader of the customer response team. "We strive to make our customers happy and satisfied with the state department. We work hard to make a new friend of MoDOT."

When a call or request comes in, Butler determines where it goes, whether Customer Response accomplishes it or if it needs to be directed to a maintenance building or the SouthWest area, such as guardrail work. To measure the feedback from the motorists that the Customer Response team responds to, they hand out a survey card when they meet them, explain who they are from MoDOT and how they are there to help them.

"A majority of the feedback we receive from motorists is positive," said Brian Antonacci, senior maintenance worker. "Most customers mention that they expect that their request would be ignored and they would never hear back from MoDOT. They are excited to hear a response from us and motorists are always thanking us with a smile and positive attitude toward MoDOT."

He added, "It's a rewarding feeling to fully take care of someone and see the positive reinforcement from customers that are so happy we responded to them quickly. Our efforts and hard work definitely shows these motorists that MoDOT cares and we are always making new friends between MoDOT and St. Louis motorists."

"We assess the tasks, stay within the guidelines and seek the experts as needed," Butler said. "Our values are to always stay safe, help a motorist in less than 24 hours and operate as a team player of MoDOT to help any part of the St. Louis district."

New Section of Route 364 is Now Open

by Linda Wilson Horn



Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioner Grace Nichols stands in the center of a group of federal, state and local elected officials to celebrate the opening of the Route 364 Page Extension Phase 2 August 30 in St. Peters. Congratulations to the MoDOT St. Charles Area Team and the Route 364 Project Office on the completion.

The second phase of the new Route 364 (Page Avenue Extension) opened to traffic on August 30 in St. Peters, two months ahead of the original schedule. The three-mile stretch completed the second phase of the Page Avenue Extension. The \$101 million project, of that \$75 million for construction, was funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, federal and state transportation funds, St. Charles County Transportation Sales Tax funds and funding from the City of St. Peters.

"We are thrilled to be opening the second phase of the Route 364 Page Avenue Extension two months ahead of schedule," said Ed Hassinger, MoDOT St. Louis District Engineer.

He added, "This project is a great example of cooperation with the local partners to work together with funding options to build a great project for the public. With the decreasing amounts of transportation funds, this collaboration with our local partners is critically important. Now the citizens of St. Charles County can enjoy six more miles of improved roadway."

The final phase of the Route 364 Page Extension will extend from Mid Rivers Mall Drive running parallel to Route N to the Route N and I-64 interchange. This section will be done using the Design-Build procurement method with one contractor team hired to develop the design and construct the road. This \$100 million project includes federal and state transportation funds, St. Charles County road tax funds and local federal transportation funds for many of the county municipalities. The Phase 3 Route 364 project will be awarded to a contractor in spring 2013 and will be complete by the end of 2014. For more information on the Route 364 Page Extension project, visit www.modot.org/route364.



Pictured left to right: I-64 Daniel Boone Bridge Project Director and former St. Charles Area Engineer Jim Gremaud, Resident Engineer Jim Wright and Senior Construction Inspector Todd Strong were all instrumental in the completion of Page Phase 2.

I-64 Daniel Boone Bridge Contract Signed

by Linda Wilson Horn

MoDOT and the Walsh-Alberici Joint Venture executed the \$110.9 million contract this week for the new Interstate 64 Daniel Boone Missouri River bridge. The joint venture will be setting up the project office in September. MoDOT's Boone Bridge team will co-locate with the Walsh-Alberici team at the office located near Spirit Airport in Chesterfield Valley. Design work has also begun and the MoDOT team will begin meeting with the contractor's design staff to provide oversight on the design. Walsh-Alberici expects construction to start by the end of the year. For more project information, visit www.modot.org/boonebridge.

For more info

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Comments & Suggestions

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ACCEPTING DELIVERY: Senior General Services Technician Marsha Tarrant wheels a freight shipment into the district warehouse. (photos by Bob Edwards)



REACHING OUT to YOUNG DRIVERS: Using one of the district's two "crash cars" as a backdrop, District Safety and Health Manager Gary McLarry speaks to a driver education class at Springfield's Parkview High School on how to drive through a work zone and the importance of seat-belt use.

Henry County Roads Shaping Up After Summer of Extensive Repairs

by Angela Eden

Clinton Maintenance, with help from Warsaw and Butler crews, spent a busy summer patching state routes in Henry County, and the folks who drive those roads have noticed.

Crews laid long cold-mix or hot-mix patches on almost every one of Henry County's minor roads -- nearly 46 miles' worth in all.

Clinton Maintenance Supervisor Steve Bryant said when his crews were out working on roads they received positive comments from drivers.

Other customers took the time to call or email the District Office to express how pleased they are with the work accomplished.

One happy caller discussed the improved ride, saying, "The roads don't have to be perfect, just smooth."

Another customer, who earlier in the year was very unhappy with the condition of roads and bridges in Henry County, emailed again in August with a more positive assessment:

"I just wanted to thank you, the folks at MODOT, for the outstanding job that is being done to improve our roads and bridges here in Henry and Cass counties. Keep up the good work and stay safe."

Bryant said the maintenance crews did "great work with zero accidents."

"We've made a lot of headway this summer," he said. "I'd like to do the same next year."

(Another 53 miles of road in Henry County were resurfaced or chip-sealed by contractors.)



Route O north of Clinton.

West Bypass / I-44 Bridge Being Replaced

by Bob Edwards

Work began this week on a nine-month long project to replace the West Bypass (Route 160) bridge over Interstate 44 in northwest Springfield.

The bridge will be replaced one side at a time.

During construction, traffic will be shifted and reduced to one lane in each direction across the part of the bridge that is still in use.



Drivers who use West Bypass regularly have been advised to expect delays at times, especially during morning and afternoon rush hours.

The project also will require I-44 underneath the West Bypass bridge to be closed for parts of two weekends -- one this month and one in February. That way contractor crews can tear out half of the bridge so the new half-section can be built.

The Southwest District has been rebuilding interchanges along I-44 for several years because erected when the interstate was built in the 1960s and early 1970s are deteriorating.

This effort includes a project that began in August and runs through the end of 2013 to replace the I-44 bridges over Range Line Road in Joplin.

The West Bypass project also includes adding new traffic signals at the I-44 ramps on the south end of the bridge. The traffic signal at the north end of the bridge at the ramps will be replaced.

The prime contractor on the bridge project is Lehman Construction of California, doing the work for a low bid amount of \$3.5 million.

The project is set for completion by late May 2013.

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Comments & Suggestions

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SE Schools Encouraged to Participate in Bridge Building Competition

Registration Deadline: Sept. 10

What can you build with 15 pieces of balsa wood, thread and glue? MoDOT's Southeast District is challenging area high school juniors and seniors to construct the most efficient bridge for this year's Ninth Annual Bridge Building Competition.

The schools must register by Sept. 10 to compete in the competition. Contest information and registration forms have been mailed to area high schools. Additionally, an online registration form is available at: www.modot.org/southeast/BridgeBuildingCompetition.htm.

The bridge kits will be delivered to participating schools on Oct. 3 and 4. Completed bridges will be picked up from participating schools on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1.

Bridges entered in the competition will be tested Nov. 15 at Cape West 14 Cine in Cape Girardeau. The lightest bridge to carry the greatest load will ultimately be declared the winner. Prizes will also be awarded for the most aesthetic bridge and to the winner of the electronic bridge competition.

Prizes donated by area businesses and organizations will be awarded to the top bridge building winners.

In addition, MoDOT has partnered with Arkansas State University, Southeast Missouri State University, Missouri University of Science and Technology, University of Missouri-Columbia and Southern Illinois University to offer seniors interested in civil engineering up to \$10,000 in scholarships.

For more information about the bridge competition, please contact Senior Highway Designer Anita Clark at (573) 472-5292 or Senior Highway Designer Gretchen Hanks at (573) 472-5294. Videos and photos from last year's competition are available at www.modot.org/southeast/talkin_transportation/BridgeCompetition.htm.



Photos and videos from last year's Eighth Annual Bridge Building Competition are available at www.modot.org/southeast.

Jackson Maintenance Crew Thank You Note

Compassion and respect mean a lot to MoDOT's customers, especially during difficult times. Ms. Sandra Blackwell wrote to MoDOT to thank the Jackson Maintenance Crew for their actions. Her note is included below.

I would like to thank the workers in Jackson, Mo., next to the park on Highway 61. We were passing in a funeral procession for a family member, and the men working there stopped digging and removed their hard hats as we passed by. Having moved here from Dallas, let me tell you this kind of compassion and respect is not often given. Several of my family members noticed this as well. I commend these men for the actions, regardless how small, it was greatly appreciated by my family and I.

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